

11.

GREENES, GROATS-VVORTH of witte, bought with a million of Repentance.

Describing the follie of youth, the falsehood of make-
shift flatterers, the miserie of the negligent,
and mischiefs of deceiving
Courtezans.

Written before his death and published at his
dyeing request.

This was also written by Mr. Greene, and called a "twelve day pamphlet."
pref. to Roger Fawcet. 1592.

Fælicem fuisse infamum.

writ by R. Greene himself. At Charing Cross to
and Frans de la Marke a p'nt ad.

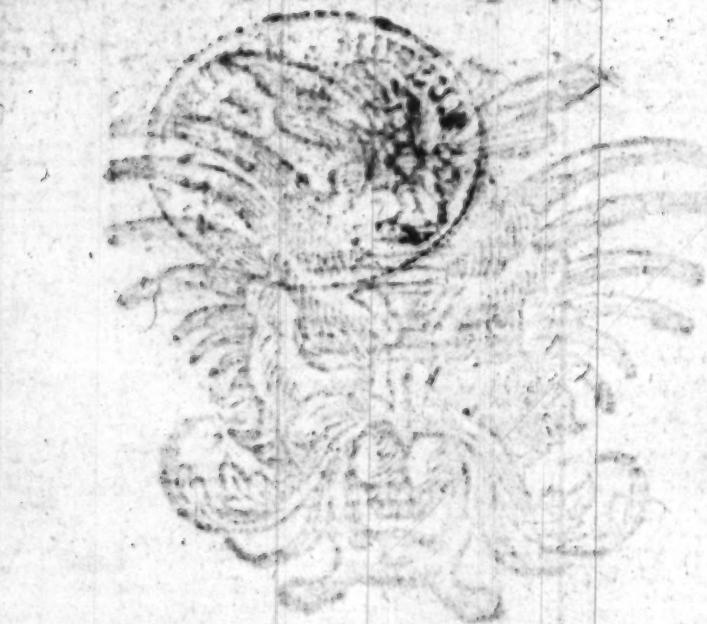


LONDON
Imprinted for William Wright.

1592.

СИЕНЯ
НТЯОУУ-СТАОЯ
of which
the following

Wissenschaftliche Beiträge zur Geschichte des Rechts und der Rechtswissenschaften



~~MODERATELY
SILKY~~

The Printer to the Gentle Readers.



Haue published here Gentle
men for your mirth and be-
nefite *Greenes* groates worth
of wit. VVith sundry of his
pleasant discourses, ye haue
beene before delighted: But
nowe hath death giuen a period to his pen:
onely this happened into my handes which I
haue published for your pleasures: Accept it
fauourably because it was his last birth and
not least worth: In my poore opinion. But I
will cease to praise that which is aboue my
concept, & leaue it selfe to speak for it selfe:
and so abide your learned censuring.

Yours VV. VV.

To the Gentlemen Readers.



Entlemen. The Swān sings
melodiously before death,
that in all his life time v-
seth but a iarring sound.
Greene though able enough
to write, yet deeplyer serched with sicknes
than euer heeretofore, sendes you his Swanne
like songe, for that he feares he shall never
againe carroll to you woonted loue layes,
neuer againe discouer to you youths plea-
sures. How euer yet sicknesse, riot, Incon-
tinence, haue at once shewn their extremitie
yet if I recouer, you shall all see, more fresh
sprigs, then euer sprang from me, direct-
ing you how to liue, yet not diswading ye
fro n loue. This is the last I haue writ, and
I feare me the last I shall writ. And how
euer I haue beene censured for some of my
former bookeſ, yet Gentlemen I protest,
they were as I had ſpeciall information.
But paſſing them, I commend this to your
faourable censures, that like an Einbriion
without

without shape, I feare me will be thrust into the world. If I live to end it, it shall be otherwise: if not, yet will I commend it to your courtesies, that you may as well be acquainted with my repentant death, as you haue lamented my careles course of life. But as Nemo ante obitum felix, so Acta Exitus probat: Beseeching therefore so to be deemed heereof as I deserue, I leauue the worke to your likinges, and leauue you to your delightes.

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GREENES GROATES-VVORTH OF WIT.



In an Island bounded with the Ocean there was sometime a Cittie situated, made riche by Marchandise, and populous by long peace, the name is not mentioned in the Antiquarie, or els worne out by times An-

tiquitie, what it was it greatly skilles not, but therein thus it happened. An old new made Gentleman herein dwelt, of no small credit, exceeding wealth, and large conscience: hee had gathered from many to bestow vpon one, so though he had two sonnes he esteemed but one, that being as himselfe, brought vp to be golds bondman, was therefore held heire apparant of his ill gathered goods.

The other was a Scholler, and maried to a proper Gentlewoman and therfore least regarded, so tis an old sayd saw: To learning & law, ther's no greater foo than they that nothing know: yet

Greenes

was not the father altogether unlettered, for he had good experiance in a Nouerint, and by the winterfall termes therein contained, had driven many a yoong Gentleman to seeke vnknowen countries, wile he was, for he boare office in his parish and sat as formally in his forfurd golwe, as if he had been a very spright dealing Burges: he was religious too, neuer without a booke at his belt, and a bolt in his mouth, readye to shooe through his unfull neighbor.

And Latin hee had some where learned, which though it were but little, yet was it profitable, for he had this Philosophye written in a ring, *Tu tibi cura*, which precept he curiously obserued, being in selfelone so religious, as he held it no poynt of charitie to part with any thing, of whiche hee living might make use.

But as all mortall thinges are momentante, and no certaintie can bee found in this vncertaine world: so Gorinius, (for that shall bee this vscrers name) after manye a gowtie pang that had pincht his exterior partes, many a curse of the people that moated into heuens presence, was at last with his last summons, by a deadly disease arrested, wheragainst when hee had long contended, and was by phisitionis given ouer, he calld his two sonnes before hym: and willing to performe the old proverbe *Qualis vita finis Ita*, he thus prepard himselfe, and admonished them. My sonnes (for so your mother sayde ye were) and so I assure my selfe one of you is, and of the other I will make no doubt. Soon se the time is com, whiche I thought would never

groat's worth of yvit.

never haue appoched and we must now be seperated, I feare never to meeete againe. This sixteene yeares dayly haue I lide vered with disease : and might I live sixteene more, howe euer miserably, I should thinke it happye. But death is relentless, and will not be intreated wittles : and knowes not what good my gold might doo him : senseles, & hath no pleasure in the delightfull places I would offer hym. In briefe, I thinke he hath with this sole my eldest sonne been brought vp in the uniuersitie, and therefore accounts that in riches is no vertue. But thou my son, (laying then his hand on the yongers head) haue thou another spirit : for without wealth, life is a death: what is gentry if welch be wanting, but base seruile beggerie . Some comfort yet it is unto me, to thinke how many Gallants sprunge of noble parents, haue croucht to Gorinius to haue sight of his gold: O gold, dessred gold , admired gold: and haue lost their patrimonies to Gorinius, because they haue not returned by their day that adored creature? How many thollers haue written rymes in Gorinius praise , and received (after long capping and reverence) a sippeng reward in signe of my superficial liberality. Briefly my yong Lucanio how I haue beeene reuerset thou seest, when honester men I confesse haue been sett farre off: for to bee rich is to bee any thing, wise, honest, worshipful, or what not. I tel thee my sonne: when I came first to this Citie my whole wardrop was onely a suite of white cheepe skins , my wealth an old groat, my woonning, the wide world. At this instant (o greefe to part with it) I haue in ready

Greenes

coyne threescore thousand pound, in plate and Jewels xv. thousand; in Bondes and specialties as much, in land nine hundred pound by the yeere: all which, Lucanio I bequeath to thee, only I deserue for Roberto thy wel red brother an old groat, (being vnd Stocke I first began with) wherewith I wish him to buy a groats-worth of wit: for he in my life hath reproond my manner of life, and thereforee at my death, shall not be contaminated with corrupt gaine. Here by the way Gentlemen must I digresse to shewe the reason of Gorinius present speach: Roberto being come from the Academie, to visit his father, there was a great feast provided: where so^r table talke, Roberto knowing his father and most of the company to be execrable usurers, inuayed mightely against that abhorred vice, insomuche that hee urg'd feares from diners of their eyes, and compunction in some of their harts. Dinner being past, he comes to his father, requesting him to take no offence at his liberall speach, seeing what he had uttred was truth. Angry sonne (said he) no by my honestie (and that is somwhat I may say to you) but ble it still, and if thou canst perswade any of my neighbours from lending vpon usurie I shalde haue the more customers: to which when Roberto would haue replyde hee shut himselfe into his studie, and fell to tell ouer his mony.

This was Robertos offence: now returne, wees to sickle Gorinius, who after he had thus vnequally distributed his goods and possessions, began to aske his sonnes how they liked his bequestes, either seemed agrēd, and Roberto urg'd him with nothing

groats worth of vvit.

nothing more than repentance of his sinnes: to thine owne said he, sonde boy, & come my Lucanio, let me give thee good counsell before my death: as soz you sir, your bookes are your counsellors, and therefore to them I bequeathe you. Ah Lucanio, my onely comfort, because I hope thou wilt as thy father be a gatherer, let me blesse thee before I dye. Multiply in welth my sonne by any meanes thou maist, onely flye Alchymie, for therein are more deceites than her beggerlye Artisites haue words, and yet are the wretches more talkative than women. But my meaning is, thou shouldest not stand on conscience in causes of profit, but heap treasure vpon treasure, for the time of neede: yet seem to be devout, els shalt thou be held vyle, frquent holy exercices gracie companie, and aboue all vse the conuersation of yoong Gentlemen, who are so wedded to prodigalitie, that once in a quarter necessarie knocks at their chamber dooress: profer them kindness to relfeue their wants, but be sure of good assurance: giue faire wordes till dayes of paiment come, & then vse my course, spare none: what though they tell of conscience (as a number will talke) look but into the dealinges of the world, and thou shalt see it is but idle wordes. Seest thou not many perissh in the streetes, and fall to thest for neede: whome small succor woulde releeue, then where is conscience, and why art thou bound to vse it more than other men? Seest thou not daylie sorgeries perturries, oppresions, rackinges of the poore, raisings of rents, inhauncing of duties even by them that should be al conscience, if they ment as they speake:

Greenes

but Lucanio if thou read well this booke (and with
that hee reacht him Machiauels strokcs at large)
thou shalst se, what tis to be so fole-holy as to make
scruple of conscience where profit presents it selfe.

Besides, thou hast an instance by the thred bare
brother here, who willing to do no wrong, hath lost
his childe's right : for who woulde wish any thinge
to him, that knowes not how to use it.

So much Lucanio for conscience : & yet I know
not what's the reason, but some-what stinges mee
inwardly when I speake of it. I father said Rober-
to, it is the worme of conscience, that urgcs you at
the last houre to remember your life, that eternall
life may followe your repentance. But fole(sayd
this miserable father, I feele it now, it was onelye
a stich. I will forwarde with my exhortation to
Lucanio. As I said my sonne, make spoyle of yoong
Gallants, by insinuating thy selfe amongst them, &
be not moued to thinke their Ancestors were fa-
mous, but consider thine were obscure, and that thy
father was the first Gentleman of the Name: Lu-
canio, thou art yet a Bachelor, and soe keepe thes
till thou maecte with one that is thy equal, I meane
in wealth: regarde not beautie, it is but a bayte to
entice thine neighbors eye : and the most faire are
commonlye most fond, vse not too many familiars,
soe fewe prooue frendes, and as easie it is to weigh
the wind, as to dive into the thoughtes of world-
lye glosers . I tell thee Lucanio , I haue seene
four-score winters besides the od seuen, yet saw I
never him, that I esteemed as my friend but gold,
that desired creature, whom I haue so deiry loued,

and

groats worth of wit.

and sound so firme a frind, as nothing to me having
it bath beeне wanting. No man but may thinke
dearly of a true frend, & so do I of it laying it under
sure locks, and lodging my heart therewith.

But now (Ah my Lucanio) now must I leane it,
and to ther I leane it with this lesson, loue none but
thy selfe, if thou wilt live esteemd. So turning him
to his studie, where his cheise treasure lay, he loud
cryde out in the wise mans woordes, O mors quam
amara, O death how bitter is thy memory to him
that hath al pleasures in this life, also with two or
thre lamentable grones bee left his life: and to
make short worke, was by Lucanio his sonne in-
terd, as the custome is with some solemnite: But
leaving him that hath left the world to him that
censureth of every worldly man, passe wee to his
sonnes: and se how his long laid vp store is by Lu-
canio lookyd into. The youth was of condition sim-
ple, shamsast, & flexible to any counsayle, which Ro-
berto perceiving, and pondering howe little was
lest to him, grew into an inward contempt of his
fathers unequall legacie, and determinate resolu-
tion to work Lucanio at possible iurie, hereupon
thus converting the sweetnes of his studys to the
sharpe thirst of revenge, he (as Ennie is seldom
idle) sought out fit companions to effect his
brotherly resolution. Neither in such a case is ill
company far to seek, for yea bath scarce so ioper-
ties, as populous Citties haue deceiving Spyns,
whose eies are Adamants, whose woordes are witch-
craftes, whose boozes lead downe to death. With
one of these female serpents Roberto consaues, and

Greecies

they conclude what euer they compassed equally to
share to their contentes. This match made, Lu-
canio was by his brother brought to the bush,
where he had scarce pruned his winges, but hee
was fast lym'd, and Roberto had what he expected.
But that wee may keepe forme, you shall hearre
howe it fortuned.

Lucanio being on a time verie pensive, his
brother brake with him in these termes . I won-
der Lucanio why you are disconsolate, that want
not any thinge in the wo尔de that may worke your
content. If wealth may delight a man, you are
with that sufficiently furnishit; if credit may pro-
cure any comfort, your word I knowe well, is as
well accepted as any mans obligation: in this Ci-
tie, are faire buildings and pleasant gardens, and
cause of solace, of them I am assured you haue your
choyce. Consider brother you are young, then plo
not altogether in meditating on our fathers pre-
cepts; which howsever they saued of profit, were
most vnlawfully to one of your yeares applied. You
must not thinke but sondrye marchants of this Ci-
tie expect your company, sondry Gentlemen desire
your familiaritie, & by couersing with such, you wil
be accounted a Gentleman: otherwise a pesant,
if ye live thus obscurely. Besides, whitch I had al-
most forgot and then had al the rest beeinge nothing,
you are a man by nature furnished with all equi-
tate proportion, worthy the loue of any courtly lady,
be she never so amazons: you haue wealth to main-
taine her, of women not little longed for: wordes
to court her you shall not want, for my selfe will be

your

groats-vvorth of vvit.

your secretarie. Byeselfe why stand I to distinguish
abilitie in particularities, when in one word it may
be said which no man can gainsay, Lucanio lacketh
nothing to delight a wife, nor anything but a wife
to delight him? My young maister being thus
clawd, and pufft vp with his owne praise, made no
longer delay, but haning on his holidate hose hee
trickt himselfe vp and like a fellowe that meane
good sooth, he clapt bys brother on the shoulder
and said. Faith brother Roberto, and ye say the
woorde lets goe seeke a wife whyle tis boar, both
of vs together, Its pay well, and I dare tourne
you loose to say as well as any of them all, well Ile
do my best said Roberto and since ye are so for-
ward let's goe nowe and try your good fortune.

With this seorth they walke, and Roberto
went directly toward the house where Lamilia
(for so wee call the Curtizan) kept her hospitall,
which was in the suburbs of the Citie, pleasantly
seated, and made more delectable by a pleasant
garden wherin it was situate. No soner come they
within ken, but Mistris Lamilia like a cunning
angler made readye her change of baytes that shee
might effect Lucanios bane: and to begin shee
sconered from her window her beanteous enticing
face, and taking a lute in her hand that shee might
the rather allure, shes sounng this sonnet with a
delicious boyce,

...tivity do at **Greene's** now.

Lamilias fong.

Fie fie on blind fancie,

It hinders youths joy:

Faire virgins learne by me,

To count lone a toy.

When loue leard first the ABC of delight,
And knew no figures, nor conceited phrase:
He simply gane to due desert her right,
He lead not louers in darke winding wayes,
He plainly wild to loue, or flatly answerd no,
But now who lists to proue shall find it nothing so,

Fie fie then on fancies,

It binders you his joy,

Faire virgins learme by me,

To come to see us.

For since he learn'd to use the Poet's pen,
He learn'd likewise with smoothing words to faine,
Witching chaste ears with troubles tangs of men,
And wronged faith with falsehood and disdaine.

He gives a promise now, whom he sweareth not,

Who listeth far to prove shall find his changings so,

Fie fie then on fancy,

It binders you the soj.

Faire virgins learn me by me,

To count lone a toy.

groats wvorth of yvit.

while this painted sepulcher was shadowing her corrupting guilt. Hiena-like alluring to destruction, Roberto and Lucanio under her windowe kept suen pace with every stop of her instrument, but especially my young Musser, (that before time like a birde in a cage had beens practise for three lynes or one and twentie yeares at least to extreame Avarice his deceased father) ¶ twas a wold to see howe hee sometyme simperd it, strivind to sett a countenance on his new turnd face, that it might seeme of mainscot proffe, to behold her face without blushing : anone he would stroke his bow-bent-leg, as if he meant to shooe lous arrodes from his shins: then woppeth his chin (for his beard was not yet grown) with a gold wrought handkercher, whence of purpose he let fall a handfull of Angels. This golden shower was no sooner rained, but Lamilia ceast her song, and Roberto (assuring himselfe the foole was caught) came to Lucanio (that stood now as one that had Mard Medusa in the face) and alwaked him from his amazement with these wordes. What in a tranne brouther? whence springs these humps? are ye amazd at this obiect? or long ye to become loves subiect? Is there not difference betweyn this delectable life, and the imprisonment you have all your life betherfor indured? If the sight and hearing of this harmonyous beautie warke in you effects of wonder, what will the possession of so deuine an ioynes, wherein beautie & Art dwelt in their perfectest excellency. Brother said Lucanio bethise felme wordes, and shee be no more then a woman, I trust your helpe

Greenes

were to win her : and if you doe, well, I say no more
but I am yours till death vs depart, and what is
mine shall be yours w^thout end Amen.

Roberto smiling at his simplenes helpte him
to gather vppē his dropt gold, and without anye
more circumstance, led him to Lamilias house : for
of such places it may be said as of hell.

Noctes atque dies patet atri ianua ditis,

So their dores are ever open to entice youth to
distruction. They were no sooner entred but La-
milia her selfe like a seconde Helen, court like be-
gins to salute Roberto, yet did her wandring eie
glance often at Lucanio : the effect of her entertain-
ment consisted in these tearmes, that to her simple
house Signor Roberto was welcome, & his b^rother the better welcom for his sake: albeit his good
repose confirme by his present demeaner were
of it selfe enough to gine him deserved entertain-
ment in any place how honorable soever: mutuall
thankes returnd, they lead this prodigall child into
a parlor garnished with goodly portrautes of
amiable personages: where in which an excellent con-
sort of musike began at their entraunce to play.
Lamilia seeing Lucanio shamefast, tooke him by
the hand, and tenderly wringing him v^sed these
woordes. Beleeue me Gentleman, I am very sorie
that our rude entertainment is such, as no way
may stroke your content, for this I haue noted
since your first entering that your countenance hath
beenie heauie, and the face being the glasse of the
hart, assures me the same is not quiet: would ye
with any thing bee^re that might content you, say
but

groats worth of vvit.

but the woorde, and assure ye of present diligence to effect your full delight. Lucanio being so farre in loue, as he perswaded himselfe without her grant he could not liue, had a good meaninge to vitter his minde but wanting fit wordes, he stooed like a trewant that lackt a prompter, or a plaier that being out of his part at his first entrance, is faine to haue the booke to speake what he shoule performe. Which Roberto perceiving, replied thus in his behalfe : Madame the Sunnes brightnesse daileth the beholders eies, the maiestie of Gods, amazeth humane men, Tullie Prince of Dratos once fainted though his cause were good, and bee that fained monsters stooode amated at Beauties ornaments ; Then blame not this yoong man though he replied not, for he is blinded with the beautie of your sunnes darkening eies, made mute with the celestiall or- gane of your boyce, and feare of that rich ambush of amber colored darthes, whose poyntes are leuell against his hart. Well Signor Roberto said shee, how ever you interpret their sharpe leuell, be sure they are not bent to doo him hurt, and but that modestie blindes vs poore maydens from vittering the inward sorrow of our mindes, perchance the cause of greefe is ours how etier men do colour, for as I am a virgin I protest, (and therewithall shee tainted her cheeke with a vermillion blush) I neuer saw Gentleman in my life in my eie so gracious as is Lucanio only this is my greefe, that either I am dispised for that he scornes to speake, or els(which is my greater sorrow) I feare he can not speake. Not speake Gentlewoman quoth Lu-

Greenes

canio that were a iest indeed, yes I thanke God I
am sound of minde and lym, only my hart is not as
it was wont: but and you be as good as your woorb
that will soone be well, and so craving ye of more
acquaintance, in token of my plaine meaning re-
ceivis this diamond, which my old father louid deere-
ly: and with that delivered her a ringe wherein
was a poynted diamonde of wonderfull worth.
Whiche she accepting with a loyng conge, returned
him a silke Riband for a favour tyde with a true
lomes knot, whiche he fastened vnder a faire Jewel
on his Beter felt.

After this Diomedis & Glauci permutatio, my
yong master swared cranche, and the musike conti-
nuing, was very sowward in dancing, to shew his
cunning: and so desiring them to play on a hozne
pipe, laid on the pavement lustely with his leaden
hæles, cozening, like a steede of Signor Roccoes
teaching, & wanted nothing but bels, to be a hobby-
horse in a morrice. Yet was he soothed in his folly,
and what ever he did Lamilia counted excellent: her
praye made him proude, in so much that if hee had
not bene intreated, hee would rather haue died in
his danice, then left off to shew his misris delight.
At last reasonably perswaded, seeing the table fur-
nished, hee was content to cease, and settle him to
his viuals, on which (having before labored) hee
fed lustely, especially of a Woodcocke pye, where-
with Lamilia his caruer, plentifully plied him. Full
dishes having furnisht empty stomackes, and Lu-
canio therby got leisure to talke, falleth to discourse
of his mealty, his landes, his bondes, his ability,

and

groats-vvorth of vvit.

and how himselfe with all he had, was at madame Lamilias disposing: desiring her before his brother to tell him simply what she meant. Lamilia replied my sweet Lucanio, how I esteem of thy mine eyes do witness, that like handmaides, haue attended thy beauteous face, euer since I firste behelde thee: yet seeing loue that lasteth, gathereth by degras his living: let this for that suffice, if I finde thee firme, Lamilia wilbe faithfull: if ffeeling, ther must of necessity be infornate: that having never seene any whome before she could affect, she shoulde be of him iniuriously forsakenn. May said Lucanio, I dare say my brother here will give his woord for th at I accept your oide said Lamilia: for with this your credite is better than your brothers. Roberto brake off their amorous parolle with this speach. With either of you are of other so sond at the first sight, I doubt not but time will make your loue more firme. Yet madame Lamilia althoough my brother and you bee thus forward, somes crotes chance may come to for multa cadunt inter calicem supremaq; labo. And for a warning to teach you bery wel, Ile tell you an old wifes tale.

Before ye got on with your tale (quoth master Lamilia) let me giue ye a cancas by the way, which shall be figured in a fable.

Lamilias Fable.



So gorges on a time came to visitte the Cray, partly to hinder dycey for crast: and finding the hole empitie of all other company, saving onyl one Badger enquired the cause of his solitariness: who di-
cribed

Greene

cribed, the sobaine death of his dam and sire with
the rest of his consorts. The Fox made a Friday
face, counterfeiting sorrow: but concludinge that
deaths stroke was vneuitable perswaded him to
seeke som fit mate wherwith to match. The badger
soone agreed, so forth they went, and in their way
met with a wāton ewe stragling from the fold: the
Fox had the Badger play the fall stripling, & strout
on his tiptoes: for (qd he) this ewe is lady of al these
lawnds and her broþer cheefe belweather of sun-
dry flockes. To bee shot by the Foxes persuasion
there would bee a perpetuall league, betweene her
harmeles kindred, and all other devouring beastes,
for that the Badger was to them all allied: sedu-
ced she yeelded, and the Fox conducted them to the
Badgers habitation. Wher drawing her aside un-
der couer of exhortation, puld out her throat to satis-
fie his greedy thirst. Here I shoulde note, a yonge
whelpe that viewed their walke, infourmed the
shepheardes of what hapned. They followed, and
traigned the Fox and Badger to the hole, the Fox
afores had craftely conuaid himselfe away, the shep-
heardes found the Badger rauing for the ewes mur-
ther, his lamentation being held for counterfeit, was
by the shepherds dogs swerryed. The Fox escaped:
the Ewe was spoiled, and ever since betweene the
Badgers and dogs hath continued a mostall enmity:
And now be aduized, Roberto (qd she) go for-
ward with your tale, seek not by fly iuination to
turne our mirth to sorrow. Go to Lamilia (qd he)
you feare what I meane not, but howe ever yet
take it, I le for ward with my tale.

groatfworth of wit.

Robertoes Tale.



In the North pates there dwelt an olde
Squier, that had a young daughter his
heire; who had (as I knowe Madam La-
milia you haue had) many youthfull Gen-
tlemen that long time sued to obtaine her
loue. But she knowing her owne perfections (as women
are by nature proud) would not to any of them vouch-
safe fauour: insomuch that they perceiving her relent-
lesse, shewed themselves not altogether witlesse, but left
her to her fortune, when they found her frowardnes. At
last it fortuned among other strangers, a Farmer's sonne
visited her Fathers house: on whom at the first sight she
was enamoured, he likewise on her. Tokens of loue past
betweene them, either acquainted others parentes of
their choise, and they kindly gaue their consent. Short
tale to make, married they were, and great solempnitie
was at the wedding feast. A yong Gentleman, that had
beene long a suiter to her, vexing that the Sonne of a
Farmer shold bee so prefered, cast in his minde by what
meanes (to marre their merriment) hee might sleale a-
way the Bride. Hereupon he confers with an olde Bel-
dam, called Mother Gunby, dwelling thereby, whose
counsell having taken, he fell to his practise, and procee-
ded thus. In the after noone, when dauncers were verie
busie, he takes the Bride by the hande, and after a turne
or two, tels her in her eare, he had a secret to impart un-
to her, appointing her in any wise in the euening to find
a time to confer with him: she promist she would, and so
they parted. Then goes hee to the Bridesgroome, & with

Greenes

protestations of entire affect, protests that the great sor-
rowe hee takes at that which hee must utter, wheron
depended his especiall credit, if it were known the mat-
ter by him shold be discouered. After the Bridegrooms
promise of secrecie, the gentleman tels him, that a friend
of his received that morning from the Bride a Letter,
wherein shee willed him with some sixteene horse to a-
wait her conning at a Parke side, for that she detested
him in her heart as a base countrey hynde, with whome
her father compeld her to marry. The Bridegroome
almost out of his wits, began to bite his lip. Nay, sayth
the Gentleman, if you will by me bee aduizde, you shall
salue her credit, win her by kindness, and yet prevent her
wanton complot. As how said the Bridegroome? Nay
thus saide the Gentleman: In the euening (for till the
guests be gone, she intends not to gad) get you on horse-
backe, and seeme to bee of the companie that attendes
her conning, I am appoynted to bring her from the
house to the Parke, and from thence fetch a winding
compasse of a mile about, but to turne unto olde Mother
Gunbyes house, where her Lourer my friend abydes:
when she alights, I will conduct her to a chamber farre
from his lodging; but when the lights are out, and shee
expects her adulterous copesmate, your selfe (as reason
is) shall proue her bedfellow, where privately you may
reprooue her, and in the morning earely returne home
without trouble. As for the Gentleman my friend, I
will excuse her absence to him, by saying, she mockt me
with her Mayde in steade of her selfe, whome when I
knew at her alighting, I disdained to bring her unto his
presence. The Bridegroome gaue his hand eit shoulde
be so.

From

groatsworth of wit.

Now by the way you must understand, this Mother Gunby had a daughter, who all that day sat heavily at home with a willow garland, for that the Bridegroome (if hee had dealt faithfully) should haue wedded her before any other. But men (Lamilia) are unconstant, money now a dayes makes the match, or else the match is marde.

But to the matter : the Bridegroome and the Gentleman thus agreed: he tooke his time, confred with the Bride, perswaded her that her husband (notwithstan- ding his faire shew at the marriage) had sworne to his olde sweet heart, their neighbour Gunbyes daughter, to bee that night her bedfellow: and if she would bring her Father, his Father, and other friendes to the house at midnight, they should find it so.

At this the young Gentlewoman inwardly vert to bee by a peasant so abusde, promist if she saw likelyhood of his slipping away, that then she would doo according as he directed.

All this thus sorting, the old womans daughter was trickly attynde ready to furnish this pageant, for her old mother provided all things necessary.

Well, Supper past, dauncing ended, and the guests would home, and the Bridegroome pretending to bring some friend of his home, got his horse, and to the Parke side he rode, and staide with the horsemen that attended the Gentleman.

Anon came Marian like mistris Bride, and mounted behind the Gentleman, away they post, fetch their compass, & at last alight at the olde wiues house, where so denvly she is conuayd to her chamber, & the bridegroome sent to kepe her company, wher he had scarce deuided how

Greenes

to begin his exhortation : but the Father of his Bryde knockt at the chamber doore. At which being somewhat amazed, yet thinking to turne it to a feast, sith his wife (as hee thought) was in bed with him, hee opened the doore, saying : Father, you are hartily welcome, I wonder how you found vs out heere ; this devise to remoue our selues, was with my wifes consent, that wee might rest quietly without the Maides and Batchelors disturbing. But wheres your wife said the Gentleman : why heere in bed saide hee . I thought (quoth the other) my daughter had beene your wife, for sure I am to day shee was giuen you in marriage. You are merrely disposed, said the Bridegroome, what thinke you I haue another wife : I thinke but as you speake quoth the Gentleman, for my daughter is below, and you say your wife is in the bed. Below (said he) you are a merry man, and with that casting on a night gowne, hee went downe, where when he saw his wife, the Gentleman his father, and a number of his friends assembled, hee was so confounded, that how to behaue himselfe he knew not; onely he cryde out that he was deceived. At this the old woman arises, and making her selfe ignorant of all the whole matter, inquires the cause of that sodayne tumult. When she was told the new Bridegroome was founde in bed with her daughter, shee exclaimd against so great an iniurie. Marian was calde in quorum : shee justified, it was by his allurement: he being condemned by all their consents, was adjudged unworthy to haue the Gentlewoman unto his wife, and compeld (for escaping of punishment) to marrie Marian : and the young Gentleman (for his care in discouering the farmers sonnes lewdnes) was recompensit with the Gentlewomanes eyer during loue.

Quoth

groat's worth of wit.

Quoth Lamilia, and what of this? Nay nothing said Roberto, but that I haue told you the effects of sodaine loue: yet the best is, my brother is a maidly Batchler; and for your selfe, you haue not bee ne troubled with many suiters. The fewer the better, said Lucanio. But brother, I can you little thanke for this tale, heereafter I pray you vse other table talke. Lets then end talk, quoth Lamilia, and you (signior Lucanio) and I will go to the Chesse. To Chesse, said he, what meane you by that? It is a game, said she, that the first daunger is but a checke, the worst, the giuing of a mate. Well, said Roberto, that game yee haue bee ne at already then, for you checkt him first with your beauty, & gaue your selfe for mate to him by your bounty. Thats wel taken brother, said Lucanio, so haue we past our game at Chesse. Wil ye play at Tassbles then, said she: I cannot, quoth hee, for I can goe no further with my game, if I be once taken. Will ye play then at cards. I said he, so it bee at one and thirtie. That fooles game, said she: Wele all to hazard, said Roberto, and brother you shall make one for an houre or two: content quoth he. So to dice they went, and fortune so fauored Lucanio, that while they continued square play, hee was no looser. Anone coosenage came about, and his Angels being double winged, flew clean from before him. Lamilia being the winner, preparde a banquet; which finished, Roberto aduisde his brother to departe home, and to furnish himselfe with more Crownes, least hee were outcrackt with new commers.

Lucanio loath to be outcounteranist, followed his aduise, desiring to attend his returue, which hee before had determined vurequested: For as soone as his brothers backe was turned, Roberto begins to recken with La-

Greenes

milia , to bee a sharer as well in the money deceitfully wonne, as in the Diamond so wilfully giuen. But she, secundum mores meretricis, iested thus with the scholler. Why Roberto, are you so well read, and yet shewe your selfe so shallow witted, to deenie women so weake of conceit, that they see not into mens demerites. Suppose (to make you my stale to catch the woodcocke your brother) that my tongue ouer-rumming myne intent, I speake of liberall rewarde : but what I promist, theres the point ; at least what I part with I will be well aduisde. It may be you will thus reason: Had not Roberto traind Lucanio vnto Lamilias lure, Lucanio had not now beene Lamilias pray : therefore sith by Roberto he possessesthe prize, Roberto merites an equal part. Monstrous absurd if so you reason; as wel you may reason thus : Lamilias dog hath kild her a Deere, therfore his Mistris must make him a pastie. No poore pennilesse Poet, thou art beguilde in mee, and yet I wonder how thou couldst, thou hast beene so often beguilde. But it farenth with licentious men, as with the chased Boze in the stream, who being greatly refresht with swiniming, never feeleth autē smart vntill hee perish recurelessly wounded with his owne weapons. Reasonlesse Roberto, that hauing but a brokers place, askest a lenders reward. Faithles Roberto, that hast attempted to betray thy brother, irreligiously forsaken thy wife, deseruedly been in thy fathers eie an abiect : thinkst thou Lamilia so loose, to consort with one so lewd. No hypocrite, the sweet Gentleman thy brother, I will till death loue, & thee while I liue, loath. This share Lamilia giues thee, other gettē thou none.

As Roberto would haue replide, Lucanio approcht:

groatsworth of wit.

to whom Lamilia discoursit the whole deceipt of his brother, & neuer rested intimating malicious arguments, til Lucanio vterly refusde Roberto for his brother, & for euer forbad him his house. And when he would haue peelded reasons, and forme excuse, Lucanios impatience (wyt by her importunate malice) forbad all reasoning with them that was reasonlesse, and so giuing him Jacke Drums intertainment, shut him out of doores : whom we will follow, & leauie Lucanio to the mercie of Lamilia. Roberto in an extreme extasie, rent his haire, cursit his desstenie, blamid his trechery, but most of all exclaimd against Lamilia : and in her against all enticing Curtizans, in these tearms.

What meant the Poets in inuective verse,
To sing Medeas shame, and Scillas pride,
Calipsoes charmes, by which so many dyde?
Onely for this their vices they rehearse,
That curious wits which in this world conuerse,
May shun the dangers and enticing shooes,
Oftsuch false Syrens, those home-breeding foes,
That from the eyes their venim do disperse.
So soone kils not the Basiliske with sight,
The Vipers tooth is not so venomous,
The Adders tung not halfe so dangerous,
As they that beare the shadow of delight,
Who chaine blind youths in tramels of their haire,
Till wast bring woe, and sorrow hast despaire.

With this he laid his head on his hand, and leant his elbow on the earth, sighing out fadly,

Hem patior telis vulnera facta meis!

On the other side of the hedge sate one that heard his sorrow : who getting ouer, came towards him, and

blake

Greenes

'brake off his passion. When hee approached, hee saluted Roberto in this sort.

Gentleman quoth hee (for so you seeme) I haue by chaunce heard you discourse some part of your greefe; which appeareth to be more than you will discouer, or I can conceipt. But if you vouchsafe such simple comforte as my abilitie may yeeld, assure your selfe, that I wil indeuour to doe the best, that either may procure you profit, or bring you pleasure: the rather, for that I suppose you are a scholler, and pittie it is men of learning shoulde liue in lacke.

Roberto wondering to heare such good wordes, for that this iron age affoordes few that esteeme of vertue; returnd him thankfull gratulations, and (vrgde by necessitie) bterred his present greefe, beseeching his advise how he might be imployed. Why, easilie quoth hee, and greatly to your benefite: for men of my profession gette by schollers their whole liuing. What is your professi-
on, said Roberto? Truly sir, saide hee, I am a player. A player, quoth Roberto, I Cooke you rather for a Gentle-
man of great liuing, for if by outward habit men should be censured, I tell you, you would bee taken for a sub-
stantiall man. So am I where I dwel (quoth the play-
er) reputed able at my proper cost to build a Wind-
mill. What though the world once went hard with me,
when I was faine to carry my playing Fardle a foote-
backe; Tempora mutantur, I know you know the mea-
ning of it better than I, but I thus conster it, its other-
wise now; for my very share in playing apparel will
not be sold for two hundred pounds. Truly (said Rober-
to) tis straunge, that you should so prosper in that bayne
practise, for that it seemes to mee your voice is nothing

gras

groat's worth of wit.

gracious. Nay then, said the Player, I mislike your judgement : why, I am as famous for Delphignus, & the King of Fairies, as ever was any of my time. The twelve labours of Hercules have I terribly thundred on the Stage, and plaid th' Scenes of the Devil in the High way to heauen. Haue ye so (saide Roberto) then I pray you pardon me. Nay more (quoth the Player) I can serue to make a prettie speech, for I was a countrey Author, passing at a Morall, for twas I that pende the Morall of mans witte, the Dialogue of Dives, and for seuen yéars space was absolute Interpreter to the puppets. But now my Almanacke is out of date:

The people make no estimation,
Of Morral's teaching education.

Was not this prettie for a plaine rime extempore? if ye will ye shall haue more. Nay its enough, said Roberto, but how meane you to vse me? Why sir, in making Playes, said the other, for which you shall be well paid, if you will take the paines.

Roberto perceiving no remedie, thought best in respect of his present necessitie, to try his wit, & went with him willingly: who lodg'd him at the Townes end in a house of recayle, where what happened our Poet, you shall after heare. There by conuersing with bad company, he grew A malo in peius, falling from one vice to another: and so having founde a vaine to finger crowns, he grew cranker than Lucanio, who by this time began to droope, beeing thus dealt with by Laminia. Shee having bewitched him with hit enticing wiles, caused him to consume in lesse than two yéeres that infinite treasure gathered by his father with so many a poore man's curse. His lands sold, his jewels pawned, his money wasted, he

Greenes

was cassard by Lamilia, that had cossend him of all.
Then walkt he like one of Duke Humfreys Squires,
in a chread-bare cloake, his hose drawne out with his
hooles, his shooes vnsenned, least his fete should sweate
with heat: now as wiclesse as hee was, he remembred
his Fathers words, his vnkindnes to his brother, his
carelesnes of himselfe. In this sorrow he sate down on
pennilesse bench; where when Opus and Vsus told him
by the chymes in his stomacke it was time to fall vnto
meat, he was faine with the Camelion to feed vpon the
aice, and make patience his best repast.

While he was at this feast, Lamilia came flaunting
by, garnished with the iewels wherof she beguiled him,
which sight serued to close his stomacke after his cold
cheare. Roberto hearing of his brothers beggery, al-
beit he had little remoufe of his miserable state, yet did
seeke him out, to vse him as a propertie, whereby Luca-
nio was somewhat prouided for. But beeing of simple
nature, hee serued but for a blocke to what Roberto es-
tit on: which the poore soule perceiving, he forsooke all
other hopes of life, and fell to be a notorious Pandar,
in which detested course he continued till death. But
Roberto now famozed for an Arch-plaimaking-poet,
his purse like the sea sometime swelde, anon like the same
sea fell to a low ebbe; yet seldom he wanted, his labours
were so well esteenied. Marry this rule he kept, what e-
uer he fingerd afore hand, was the certaine meane s to
vnbinde a bargatne, and being askt why hee so slightly
dealt with them that did him good? It becoms me, saith
hee, to bee contrary to the worlde; for commonly when
bulgar men receiue earnest, they doo performe, when
I am paid any thing aforthe-hand, I breake my promiso.

He

groat's worth of wit.

He had chift of lodgings, where in every place his Ho-
use was writ up the wofull remembrance of him, his laun-
dresse, and his boy; for they were euer his in household,
beside retaineres in sundry other places. His companie
were lightly the lewdest persons in the land, apt for pil-
ferie, perjurie, forgerie, or any villainy. Of these he
knew the casts to cog at cards, coissen at Dice; by these
he learn'd the legerdemaines of knips, forsters, compyca-
thers, crosbyters, lifts, high Lawyers, and all the rab-
ble of that uncleane generation of vipers: and pichily
could he paint out their whole courses of craft: So can-
ning he was in all craftes, as nothing rested in him al-
most but craftines. How often the Gentlewoman his
wife labored vainely to recall him, is lamentable to
note: but as one given ouer to allewdnes, he commu-
nicated her sorrowfull lines among his loose truls, that
rested at her bootless lament. If he could any way get
credite on scɔres, he woulde then bzag his creditors car-
ried stones, comparing every round circle to a grominge
procured by a painfull burden. The shamefull ende
of sundry his consores deservedly punished for their a-
misse, wrought no compunction in his heart: of which
one, brother to a Brothell bee kept, was trust vader &
trust as round as a Ball.

To some of his swearing companions thus it hap-
pened: A crue of them sitting in a Tauerne carowsing,
it fortuned an honest Gentleman and his friend, to en-
ter their roome: some of them beeing acquainted with
him, in their domineering drunken vaine would haue
no ray but downe hee must needes sitte with them; be-
ing placed, no remedie there was, but he must needes
keepe euer compasse with their unseemely carowsing.

Greenes

which he refusing, they fell from high words to sound strokes, so that with much adoe the Gentleman saved his owne, and shifted from their company. Being gone one of these tiplers forsooth lackt a gold Ring, the other sware they saw the Gentleman take it from his haunde. Upon this the Gentleman was indited before a Judge, these honest men are deposde : whose wisedome weighing the time of the braule, gaue light to the Turp, what power wine-washing poyson had, they according vnto conscience found the Gentleman not guilty, and God released by that verdit the innocent.

With his accusers thus it fared : One of them for murder was worthily executed : the other neuer since prospered : the third, sitting not long after vpon a lustie horse, the beast sodenly dyde vnder him, God amend the man.

Roberto euery day acquainted with these examples, was notwithstanding nothing bettered, but rather hardened in wickednesse. At last was that place iustified, God warnechmen by d̄reams and visions in the night, and by knowne examples in the day, but if hee returne not, hee comes vpon him with iudgement that shall bee felt. For now when the number of deceites caused Roberto bee hatefull almost to all men, his immeasurable drinking had made him the perfect Image of the drop-sie, and the loachsome scourge of Lust tyrannized in his bones : lying in extreme pouerty, and hauing nothing to pay but chalke, which now his Pest accepted not for currant, this miserable man lay comfortlessly languishing, hauing but one groat left (the iust proportion of his Fathers Legacie) which looking on, he cryed: O now it is too late, too late to buy witte with th̄s ; and therefore will

groatsworth of wit.

will I say if I can sell to carelesse youth what I negligently forgot to buy.

Hære (Gentlemen) b̄eake I off Robertoes speach; whose life in most parts agreeing with mine, foun̄d one selfe punishment as I haue doone. Hære after suppose me the saide Roberto, and I will goe on with that hee promised: Greene will send you now his groats-worth of wit, that never shewed a mites-worth in his life: & though no man now bee by to doo mee good: yet ere I die I will by my repentaunce iñdeuour to doo all men good.

Deceiuing world, that with alluring toyes,
Hast made my life the subiect of thy scorne:
And scorkest now to lend thy fading ioyes,
To length my life, whom friends haue left forlorne.
How well are they that die ere they be borne,
And neuer see thy sleights, which few men shun,
Till vnawares they helpelesse are vndone.

Oft haue I sung of Loue, and of his fire,
But now I finde that Poet was aduizde;
Which made full feasts increasers of desire,
And proues weake loue was with the poore despizde.
For when the life with food is not suffizde,
What thought of Loue; what motion of delight;
VVhat plasance can procede from such a wight?

VVitnesse my want, the murderer of my wit;
My rauisht sence of wanted furie rest;
VVants such conceit, as shou'd in Poems fit
Set downe the sorrow wherein I am left;

Greenes

But therefore haue high heauens their gifts bereft,
Because so long they lent them mee to vs,
And I so long their bountie did abuse.

O that a yeare were graunted me to liue,
And for that yeare my former wits restorde:
VVhat rules of life, what counsell would I giue?
How shold my sinne with sorrow be deplorde?
But I must dicof euery man abhorde.

Time loosely spent will not againe be wonne,
My time is loosely spent, and I vndone.

O horrenda fames, how terrible are thy assaults
but vermis conscientiae, moe wounding are thy stings.
Ah Gentlemen, that liue to read my broken and confu-
sed lines, looke not I shold (as I was wont) delight
you with vaine fantasies, but gather my follies alto-
ther; and as yee would deale with so many particides,
cast them into the fire: call them Telogones, for now
they kil their Father, and every lewds line in them wri-
ten, is a deepe piercing wound to my heart; every idle
houre spent by any in reading them, bringes a million of
sorowes to my soule. O that the teates of a miserable
man (for never any man was yet moe miserable)
might wash their memorie out with my death; and that
those works with mee together might bee interd. But
sith they cannot, let this my last wo^{rke} witnes against
them with mee, how I detest them. Blacke is the re-
membrance of my blacke workes, blacker than night,
blacker than death, blacker than hell.

Learne wit by my reperiance (Gentlemen) and let
these few rules following be regarded in your lines.

I First

groatsworth of wit.

1 First in al your actions set God before your eies; for the feare of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: Let his word be a lancerne to your feet, and a light unto your paths, then shall you stand as firme rocks, and not be mocked.

2 Beware of looking backe, for God will not bee mocked; and of him that hath received much, much shall be demaunded.

3 If thou be single, and canst abstaine, turne thy eies from vanitie; for there is a kinde of women bearing the faces of Angels, but the hearts of Devils, able to intrap the elect if it were possible.

4 If thou bee married, forsake not the wife of thy yong to follow straunge flesh; for whoremongers and adulterers the Lord will judge. The doore of a harlot leadeth downe to death, and in her lips there dwells destruction; her face is decked with odors, but she bringeth a man to a moysell of bread and nakednes: of which my selfe am instance.

5 If thou be left rich, remember those that want, & so deale, that by thy wilfulnes thy selfe want not: Let not Taverners and Ticiuallers be thy Executors; for they will bring thee to a dishonorable graue.

6 Oppresse no man; for the crie of the wronged ascendeth to the eares of the Lord: neyther delight to increase by Usurie, least thou loose thy habitation in the everlasting Tabernacle.

7 Beware of building thy house to thy neighbours hart; for the stones will crie to the timber; Wee were laid together in bloud: and those that so erect houses, calling them by their names, shall lie in the graue lyke sheep, and death shall gnat upon their soules.

Greenes

8 If thou be poore, be also patient, and strue not to grow rich by indirect meanes; for goods so gotten shal vanish like smoke.

9 If thou bee a Father, Master, or Teacher, ioyne good example with good counsaile; else little auaille preceptes, where life is different.

10 If thou be a Sonne or Servant, despisse not reprove; for though correction bee bitter at the first, it bringeth pleasure in the end.

Had I regarded the first of these rules, or bene obedient to the last; I had not now at my last ende, bee left thus desolate. But now, though to my selfe I give Consilium post facta; yet to others they may serue for timely preceptes. And therefore (while life giues leauue) I will send warning to my olde consoors, which haue liued as loosely as my selfe, albeit meaknesse will scarce suffer me to write, yet to my fellow Schollers about this Cittie, will I direct these few insuring lines.

To those Gentlemen his Quondam acquaintance,
that spend their wits in making plates, R.G.,
wherewith a better exercise, and wisdome
to preuent his extremities.

If wofull experiance may moue you (Gentlemen) to beware, or vnheard of wretchednes intreate you to take heed: I doubt not but you wil looke backe with sorrow on your tyme past, and indeuour with repentence to spend that which is to come. Wonder not, (for with thē wil I firs̄t begin) thou famous gracer of Tragedians, that Greene, who hath said with thē (like the knole in his heart) There is no God, shoulde now give glorie

groat's worth of wit.

glorie unto his greatness : for penetrating is his power,
his hand lyes heauie vpon me, bee hath spoken unto mee
with a voice of thunder, and I haue felt he vs a God that
can punish enemies. Whyn shoulde thy excellent wit, his
gift, bee so blinde, that thou shouldest gaine no glorie to
the givere? Is it pestilent Maximilian policy that thou
haue studie? O peevish follie! What are his rules but
meere confused mockeries, able to extirpate in small
time the generation of mankind. For if Sic volo, sic in-
beo, hold in those that are able to commaund: and if it
be lawfull Fas & nefasto do any thing that is benefic-
all; onely Tyrants shoulde possesse the earth, and they
striving to exceed in cyrannie, shoulde each to other be a
slaughter man; till the mightiest oulturing all, one
stroke were lefte for Death, that in one age mans life
should end. The brocher of this Diabolicall Acherisme
is dead, and in his life had never the felicitie hee aymed
at: but as he began in craft, liued in feare, and ended in
despaire. Quam inscrutabilia sunt Dei iudicia? This
murderer of many brethren, had his conscience seared
like Caine: this betrayer of him that gaue his life for
him, inherited the portion of Iudas: this Apostata perf-
shed as ill as Julian: and wilt thou my friend be his dis-
ciple? Looke but to me, by him yerswaded to that liber-
tie, and thou shalt finde it an infernall bondage. I knowe
the least of my demerits merit this miserable death, but
wilfull striving against knowne truth, excedeth all the
terrors of my soule. Deser not (with me) till this last
point of extremite; for little knowest thou holm in the end
thou shalt be visitid.

With thee I ioyne yong Iuuenall, that byting Sa-
tyr, that lastly with mee together wylt a Comedie.

Greene's

Sweet boy, might I advise thee, be aduisive, and get not
many enemies by bitter bawdes: inveigh against vaine
men, for thou canst do it, no man better, no man so well:
thou hast a libertie to reprooue all, and name none; for
one being spoken to, all are offended; none being blamed
no man is injured. Stop shallow water still running, it
will rage, or tread on a wome and it will turne: then
blame not Schollers vexed with sharpe lines, if they re-
prooue thy too much liberty of reprooche.

And thou no lesse deserving than the other two, fit
some things rarer, in nothing inferiour; drinen (as my
selfe) to extreme shiffts, a little haue I to say to thee: and
were it not an idolatrous oþ, I would sweare by sweet
S. George, thou art unworthy better hap, sith thou de-
pendest on so meane a stay. Base minded men all three
of you, if by my miserie you be not warnd: for unto none
of you (like mee) sought those burres to cleane: those
puppets (I meane) that spake from our mouthes, those
Anticks garnisht in our colours. Is it not strange, that
I, to whom they all haue beene beholding: is it not like
that you, to whome they all haue beene beholding, shall
(were yee in that case as I am now) bee both at once of
them forsaken? Yes trust them not: for there is an up-
start Crow, beautified with our feathers, that with his
Tygers hart wrapt in a Players hyde, supposes he is as
well able to bombast out a blanke verse as the best of
you: and beeing an absolute Iohannes fac totum, is in
his owne conceit the onely Shake-scene in a countrey.
O that I might intreat your rare wits to be imployed in
more profitable courses: & let those Apes imitate your
past excellency, and neuer more acquaint them with
your admired iuentions. I knowe the best husband of
you.

groatwōrth of wit.

you all will never proue an Cisiter, and the humer of them all will never proue a kind nurse: yet whilast you may, seeke you better Maisters; for it is pittie men of such rare wits, shoule be subiect to the pleasure of such rude gromes.

In this I might insert two more, that both hattē
wit against these buckram Gentlemen: but lette their
owne woakes serue to witnessse against their owne wic-
kednesse, if they perleuere to maintaine any more such
peasants. For other new-commers, I leauē them to the
mercie of these painted monstres, who(I doubt not)
will drame the best minden to despise them: for the rest,
it skils not though they make a least at them.

But now returne I agayne to you three, knowing
my shifte is to you no newes: and let mee hartily in-
creas you to be warned by my harmes, Delight not(as I
haue done) in irreligious oathes; for from the blasphem-
ers house, a curse shall not depart. Despise drunke-
ness, which wasteth the wit, and maketh men all estrall
unto beasts. Flie lust, as the deachsman of the soule; and
desile not the Temple of the holy Ghost. Abhorre shole-
Epicures, whose loose life hath made religion lothsome
to your eates: and when they sough you with eatins of
Halforship, remember Robert Greent, whome they
haue often so flattered, perishes now for want of com-
fort. Remember Gentlemen, your tides are like to ma-
ny lighted Tapers, that are with care deliuert to all
of you to maintaine: these with wind-puffe to hath may
be extinguished, which drunkennes put out, vponch tie gli-
gence let fall: for mannes tyme is not of it selfe so thond,
but it is more shorened by sinne. The fire of thy life is
now at the last brasse, and for want of booke to ther-
staine

Greenes

Truth it, there is no substance lefte for life to feede on.
Trust not then (I beseech ye) to such weake states : for
they are as changeable in minde, as in many attyses.
Well, my hand is tyde, and I am foynt to leaue where I
would begin : for a whole booke cannot containe their
yonges, which I am foynt to knit up in some fewe lines
of woldes.

Desirous that you should live,
though himselfe be dying:

Robert Greene.

To all men I bid farewell in like sort, with this
conceited Fable of that olde Comedian Asope.

A ~~Ant~~ Ant and a Grashopper walking together on a
Greene, the one carelessly skipping, the other care-
fully pying what winters provision was scattered in
the way : the Grashopper scorning (as wantons will)
this needlesse thirst (as hee termed it) reproached him
thus:

The greedy miser thirsteth still for gaine,
His thirst is theft, his weale works others woes:
That foole is fond which will in caues remaine,
When mongst faire sweets he may at pleasure goe.

To this the Ant perceiving the Grashoppers mea-
ding, quickly replyde:

The thrifte husband spares what vnthrifte spends,
His thirst no theft, for dangers to provide:
Trust to thy selfe, small hope in want yeeld friends,
The cage is better than the deserts wide.

30

groatworth of wit.

In short time these two parted, the one to his pleasure,
the other to his labour. Anon Harvest grem on,
and refت from the Grasshopper his mounted moisture.
Then weakly I kipt hee to the medowes bynks : where
till fell winter he abode. But storme continually pow-
ring, hee went for succour to the Ant his olde acquain-
tance, to whom hee had scarce discouered his estate, but
the waspish little worme made this reply.

Packe hence (quoth he) thou idle lazieworme,
My house doth harbor no vnthrifte mates:
Thou scorndst to toile, & now thou feelst the storme,
And starust for food while I am fed with cates.
Vse no intreats, I will relentless rest,
For toyling labour hates an idle guest.

The Grasshopper foodlesse, helplesse and strengthles,
got into the next brooke, and in the yeelding sand digge
for himselfe a pit : by which hee likewise ingravide this
Epitaph.

When Springs greene prime arrayd me with delight,
And euery power with youthfull vigor fild,
Gave strength to worke what euer fancie wild:
I newer feard the force of winters spight.

When first I saw the sunne the day begin,
And dry the Mornings tears from hearbs and grasses,
I little thought his chearefull light would passe,
Till vgly night with darknes enterd in.

And then day lost I mournd, spring past I wayld,
But neicher teares for this or that auilde.

Greenes

Then too too late I praisd the Emmets paine,
That sought in spring a harbor gainst the heate:
And in the harvest gathered winters meat,
Preuenting famine, frosts, and stormy raine.

My wretched end may warn Greene springing youth,
To vse delights, as toyes that will deceiue,
And scorne the world before the world them leaue:
For all worlds trust, is ruine without ruth.

Then blest are they that like the roylling Ant,
Prouide in time against winters wofull want.

With this the Grasshopper yielding to the mothers extremit,
died comfortles without remedy. Like hym my selfe:
like me, shall all that trust to friends or times in-
constancie. Now faint I of my last infirmitie, beseeching
them that shall burie my bodie, to publish this last fare-
well written with my wretched hand.

Felicem fuisse infaustum.

A letter written to his wife, founde with
this booke after his death.

The remembrance of the many wrongs offred thee,
and thy reprooued vertues, adde greater sorrow
to my miserable state, than I can bitter or thou conceiue.
Neither is it lessened by consideration of thy absence, I
(though shame would hardly let me behold thy face) but
exceedingly aggravated, so that I cannot (as I ought)
to thy owne selfe reconcile my selfe, that thou mightst
witness my inward woe at this instant, that haue made
thee

groat's worth of wit.

thee a wofull wife for so long a time. But equall heauen hath denide that comfort, giuing at my last neede like succour as I haue songht all my life : being in this extremitie as boide of helpe, as thou hast beene of hope. Reason would, that after so long wast, I shold not send thee a child to bring thee greater charge : but consider he is the fruit of thy wombe, in whose face regarde not the fathers faultes so much, as thy owne perfections. He is yet Greene, and may grow straight, if he be carefully tended : otherwise, apt enough (I feare mee) to follow his fathers folly. That I haue offended thee highly I knowe, that thou canst forget my iniuries I hardly beleue : yet perswade I my selfe, if thou saw my wretched estate, thou couldst not but lament it : nay certaintly I know thou wouldest. All my wronges muster themselfues before mee, euery euill at once plagues mee. For my contempt of God, I am contemned of men : for my swearing and foyswearing, no man will beleue me : for my gluttony, I suffer hunger : for my drunckenes, chirst : for my adultery, blcerous sores. Thus God hath cast me downe, that I might be humbled : and punished me for example of other sinners : and although he strangely suffers me in this world to perish without succor, yet trust I in the world to come to find mercie, by the merites of my Sauour to whom I commend thee, and commit my soule.

Thy repentant husband for his disloyaltie, Robert Greene.

Felicem fuisse infamatum.

FINIS.